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ABSTRACT

A study of articulation of vocational education programs in Arizona was conducted to provide a framework by which a more effective system of vocational training could be established. It began by defining articulation. The literature reviewed in this part of the study provided models as well as alternative definitions of articulation. Based on the definition, current articulation activities were identified by reviewing the county plans and by interviewing the community college occupational deans. Three major findings became apparent. First, some articulation was taking place between the secondary and postsecondary levels of vocational education. These activities were expected to expand and improve in the immediate future. Second, vocational education providers sensed a need to design articulated programs because of legislative emphasis, limited funding, and reduction in vocational education enrollments. Third, a model for articulation was needed by vocational educators, since no statewide plan for articulation existed currently. Changes in a variety of conditions in Arizona were recommended to further the development of articulated vocational education programs, including changes in the funding pattern, certification requirements, state statutes, and development of incentives for articulation. (Eleven references and the interview guide are appended.) (YLB)

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ARTICULATION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN ARIZONA

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ARTICULATION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN ARIZONA

by

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Northern Arizona University

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FOREWORD

Project 1995

Project 1995 was funded in March, 1983, to provide direction for Vocational Education in Arizona through the year 1995. The study had seven objectives which resulted in the following seven monographs:

- A Study of Arizona Labor Market Demand Data for Vocational Education Planning
- A Study of Vocational Education Follow-Up Procedures
- Analysis of Data on the Nature and Scope of Vocational Education Programs in Arizona
- Articulation of Vocational Education Programs in Arizona
- Analysis of State Funding Alternatives for Vocational Education
- A Model for Determining Vocational Education Funding Priorities
- A Plan to Improve Arizona Vocational Education Data Systems

Although each monograph covers a specific area of study, there are relationships among them and all provide recommendations for improvements in Arizona's vocational education data systems.

A number of recommendations for short-term and long-range modifications in the data system have been made. As these changes are implemented, more valid and reliable data will be available to plan vocational education in the future.

Acknowledgements

We thank Task Force 1995 for their support and guidance throughout the duration of this project. We acknowledge the efforts of the Technical Review Committee members for their time in providing direction and in reviewing the monograph. The memberships of the Project 1995 Task Force and the Technical Review Committee are presented in Appendix A.

In the development of this document the contributions of the following individuals and agencies are greatly appreciated.

The Arizona Department of Education
Arizona Center for Vocational Education
Maricopa Community Colleges

Arizona State University
The Occupational Deans of the Community Colleges of Arizona
Deer Valley School District
Phoenix Union High School District

In addition, we are grateful to the following individuals: Gene Dorr, the Community Colleges Board, gave advice and provided direction to this study of articulation; Shirley Mannion and Joe Baird, Arizona Department of Education, took time from their busy schedules to provide advice and information which aided in the identification of current articulation activities in Arizona. Additional advice was shared by Richard Froese, Arizona State Advisory Council. To these individuals we owe a debt of gratitude.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This monograph describes a study of articulation of vocational education programs in Arizona. The study began by defining articulation. Based on this definition, current articulation activities were identified by reviewing the county plans and by interviewing the community college Occupational Deans. Barriers to articulation and reasons for articulation were also identified.

Three major findings became apparent through this study. They are:

1. There is some articulation taking place between the secondary and post-secondary levels of vocational education. It appears these activities will expand and improve in the immediate future.

2. Vocational education providers sense a need to design articulated programs because of legislative emphasis, limited funding, and some reduction in vocational education enrollments.

3. A model for articulation of vocational education programs is needed by vocational educators. Currently, no statewide plan exists for articulation of vocational education programs.

To further the development of articulated vocational education programs, a variety of conditions in Arizona have to be changed. These include changes in the funding pattern, certification requirements, state statutes, and development of incentives for articulation.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This study of articulation of vocational education programs in Arizona is intended to provide a framework by which a more effective system of vocational training can be established. Decreasing secondary school and community college enrollment in vocational programs, along with limitations in funding emphasize the need for this study. Articulation was identified as one of the areas of research for Project 1995 and the following tasks were planned.

1. Conduct a literature search for a definition of articulation among vocational education programs in secondary schools, post-secondary institutions, training programs, and industry-based programs.

2. Identify and acquire source materials needed for data collection.

3. Develop a definition of Articulation with respect to vocational education programs.

4. Develop an interview guide for obtaining information relative to the articulation of vocational programs.

5. Review definition of Articulation and interview guide with Technical Review Committee.

6. Conduct interviews with selected institutions and industrial training centers.

7. Collect articulation data from each County plan.

8. Develop list of strengths and weaknesses concerning the articulation of vocational programs.

9. Review strengths and weaknesses of vocational program articulation among vocational programs.

10. Develop alternatives for modifying and improving articulation among vocational programs.

11. Draft monograph.

12. Review alternatives and draft monograph with the Technical Review Committee.

13. Present monograph to Steering Committee for review.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this review was to identify alternative definitions of articulation. The reviewed literature also provided models as well as definitions of articulation.

Reasons For Articulation

In the articulation study conducted by the Michigan Department of Education (1975) they emphasized the importance of planning and coordination between secondary schools and community colleges in order to avoid duplication of learning experiences and overlap of curricula. Without such planning, schools "waste time and money and often fail to challenge young people." Further, "the increasing cost of education to students, parents and taxpayers makes improvement of articulation a necessity."

The emphasis for vocational program articulation and two types of articulation are identified by the Arizona State Advisory Council on Vocational-Technical Education, in their (1983) survey report which stated:

> Responders generally agreed that articulation (both vertical and horizontal) is important to successful Vocational Education. A substantial majority of responders said that Post-secondary institutions should provide credit for students who have successfully completed secondary vocational classes in their program area (vertical articulation). They further agreed that consolidation of vocational programs between school districts (horizontal articulation) is essential to the provision of effective vocational offerings.

Horizontal and vertical articulation are the two types commonly identified by researchers and they are defined by Dillenbeck (1980) as:

> Horizontal articulation includes those relationships between programs, courses, or activities which exist at any one educational competency level and provide a coordinated educational program for the student. Vertical articulation refers to those relationships which exist between institutions, programs, courses or activities and provides a coordinated program for a student moving from one educational competency level to the next.

The primary reasons that support the need for articulation, both horizontal and vertical are:

1. Elimination of duplicated learning.
2. Better use of instructional resources (buildings, equipment, staff and media).
3. Reduced costs to students, parents and taxpayers.
4. Increased student access to programs.
5. Provides students with a challenging curriculum.
6. Eliminates loss of time for the student.
7. Provides for a more effective program and better trained student.
8. Provides a system for identifying student competencies.
9. Improves community support for programs and institutions.

Definitions

Definitions for vocational education programs are included in all of the major studies, and the need for a working definition before the structuring of an articulation process is stressed. McCormick (1980) divides articulation into four elements:

> Most commonly, articulation is referred to as a process describing how the student's educational progression can be jointed. Many definitions focus upon the good/objective(s) of articulation while others place an emphasis on the outcome(s)/product(s). More recently, educators have come to realize that attitude is the underlying and most important element related to articulation.

Heuchert (1975) defined articulation very simply as: "the relationship between educational programs which provide a smooth transition for a student moving either horizontally or vertically between programs." Very similarly, McKinnerney (1974) said: "Articulation refers to the relationship between educational programs which are designed to provide a smooth transition for the student from one educational program to another. This movement of the student between programs can be either horizontal or vertical."

The definitions of articulation are student centered, and most refer only to vertical movement. They tend to emphasize cooperation

between institutions, and refer primarily to secondary, post-secondary institutions. Some include the reasons, advantages and operational procedures of articulation.

"The multi-dimensional process of dovetailing institutional operations and responsibilities to enhance progression of students in curriculum areas from one level (high school) to another (community college) and maximize resources. Articulation must be an ongoing process which may be carried out in concert with initial program planning but also after programs are already operational." (Opachinch, 1974).

Articulation Definitions

The review of literature generally indicates six different definitions of articulation. While having similarities, they warrant statement separately due to different emphases and philosophies. The identified definitions follow.

1. Articulation is the action resulting from policies and procedures employed to provide: (a) vocational education program alignment and continuity in a given occupational area between the high schools and the community colleges conducting the programs; (b) skills and related technical information required by the student to achieve smooth transition through the various levels of educational experiences in that program; (c) transition of the student from one educational level to another in a given occupational area without unnecessary delay or duplication of effort; and (d) improved cooperation among institutions, school systems, and communities at both the local area and state levels that share interest in the same occupational program(s).

2. Articulation refers to the relationships between educational programs which are designed to provide a smooth transition for the student from one educational program to another. This movement of the student between programs can be either horizontal or vertical.

Horizontal articulation includes those relationships between programs, courses or activities which exist at any one educational competency level and provide a coordinated educational program for the student. Vertical articulation refers to those relationships which exist between institutions, programs, courses, or activities and provide a coordinated program for a student moving from one educational competency level to the next.

3. Articulation is defined as the planned process within the educational system which facilitates the transition of students between secondary and post-secondary levels of instruction, and allows the students to move with continuity and without hindrance through levels of the education process.

4. Arrangement of components of various levels of vocational education in a connected sequence so that individuals choosing more than one level of instruction can move on to the next level without either gap or overlap in curriculum.

5. The action resulting from policies and procedures employed to provide for:

a. Vocational/occupational program alignment and continuity in a given occupational area between high schools and post-secondary institutions conducting the program;

b. Skills and related technical information required by the student to achieve a smooth transition through the various levels of educational experience in that program;

c. Transition of the student from one educational level to another in a given occupational area without unnecessary administration delay or duplication of effort; and,

d. Improved communication and cooperation between institutions, school systems, and communities at both local area and state levels that share interest in the same occupational program(s).

6. Articulation can be characterized as a process, an attitude, and a goal.

As a process, it is the coordination of policies and practices among sectors of the educational system to produce a smooth flow of students from one sector to another. As an attitude, it is exemplified by the willingness of educators in all sectors to work together to transcend the individual and institutional self-interest that impedes the maximum development of the student. As a goal, it is the creation of an educational system without artificial divisions, so that the whole educational period becomes one unbroken flow, which varies in speed for each individual, and which eliminates loss of credit, delays and unnecessary duplication of effort.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Interviews

The community colleges of the state were identified as the primary source of information on articulation since they serve both the secondary schools and the industry training programs.

The Interview Guide was mailed to every community college Occupational Dean and was followed up by a telephone call. An appointment was made to meet with the Deans in Maricopa, Pinal, and Pima Counties. Ten meetings occurred in which the Interview Guide was used to collect data. The six other community college Deans reviewed the Guide and its purpose by telephone and mailed in their copy (Appendix B).

The interview process, both in person and on the telephone, revealed more information than would have been obtained by mail only. Three secondary school systems indicated to be significantly involved in articulation were also interviewed in order to gain insight from their perspective.

County Plan Review

County plans developed under Senate Bill 1106 contain three sections which deal with articulation. They are:

(1) Duplication of programs

(2) Coordination of local vocational/technical training

(3) Transferability and interface of secondary and post-secondary programs (articulation).

This study is most concerned with the third area but the first two do impact significantly upon articulation. These parts of the county plans were included in the considerations for the development of tasks eight and ten. Individual county plans were reviewed along with the state summary of county vocational educational plans.

Chapter 4

FINDINGS

Articulation Definition

From among the possible articulation definitions, a combination of two was decided as the best by the Technical Review Committee. This definition is student centered and includes reference to an attitude, which is a necessary ingredient. The recommended definition for Arizona follows.

Articulation refers to the relationships between educational programs which are designed to provide a smooth transition for the student from one educational program to another. This movement of the student between programs can be either horizontal or vertical.

Horizontal articulation includes those relationships between programs, courses or activities which exist at any one educational competency level. Vertical articulation refers to those relationships shich exist among institutions, programs, courses or activities and provide a coordinated program for a student moving from one educational competency level to the next.

Articulation may be characterized as a process, an attitude, and a goal. As a process, it is the coordination of policies and practices among sectors of the educational system. As an attitude, it is exemplified by the willingness of educators in all sectors to work together to transcend the individual and institutional self-interest that impedes the maximum development of the student. As a goal, it is the creation of an educational system without artificial divisions, so that the whole educational period becomes one unbroken flow.

Inventory of Articulation Activities Among Secondary and Post-Secondary Schools in Arizona

The interviews and reading of the county plans uncovered a number of articulation efforts. These efforts varied from formal agreements to sharing of equipment and facilities, and to advanced student placement. These findings are detailed below.

1. Eleven of the state community colleges currently have formal articulation agreements with one or more high school districts in their service area.

2. In seven of the agreements the cooperating institutions have agreed upon program competencies and competency levels.

3. In eight cases the community college is using high school facilities and equipment, and in three cases the high schools are using community college facilities and equipment. In four cases they share equipment.

4. In all of the sixteen state community colleges qualified, high school teachers are hired on a part-time basis to teach vocational classes. In two cases they teach high school and college students together.

5. Seven colleges provide for advanced placement of high school students who completed high school programs in specific program areas.

6. In two situations, high school students can take vocational courses on their campus and receive either high school or community college credit depending upon how they register.

7. In two cases community college students can take vocational courses on a high school campus for college credit.

8. In no situations are students allowed to receive both high school and college credit at the same time (double dipping).

9. In all colleges students may "challenge" a course. The process of evaluation varies somewhat across the state.

10. In one case, a crossover between high school and college students is possible for any vocational course not offered by the home school of the student. The home school pays the tuition to the teaching institution.

11. The program areas in which articulation most frequently occur are those which require the acquisition of many skills, are highly specialized, or require expensive facilities or equipment. They are: electronics, health, drafting, automotive, diesel mechanics, word and data processing. Other programs being articulated are: foods, aviation mechanics, graphic arts, welding, and upholstery.

12. Plans for additional future articulation of specific program areas exist in six service areas between secondary and post-secondary schools. All others are open to future or additional articulation.

In summary, college and high school articulation has been stimulated by Senate Bill 1106 and by declining high school enrollments. In some situations funding proposals are written jointly. Many of the developed county plans deal with articulation.

Both secondary districts and community colleges recognize that the financial strength of each occurs in different budget areas. Many

secondary schools have capital funds available, while community colleges are more limited. Community colleges have more funds available for staff than do high school districts. Some attempts are being made to create a linking of the available resources in order to offer programs not otherwise available.

The use of joint advisory councils for articulated programs is occurring in some, but not all, cases. Often the determination of competencies and competency levels is accomplished between the respective faculties only. With the emphasis on competency by the state most feel that they can agree on competencies if time and money are available.

Skill centers in Tucson and Phoenix, which operate under the community college umbrella, offer vocational courses to high school and adult students on a tuition basis. A number of high school students are enrolled in a broad variety of programs.

All community colleges are working with business and industry in their service areas to provide courses, programs, and specialized training. This includes the use of industry-based facilities and equipment, along with business and industry staff.

Reasons for Articulation

From the interviews conducted with the state community colleges and selected high school districts, along with data from the county plans (S.B. 1106) the following reasons for articulation are those most frequently identified:

1. Elimination of duplicated learning.
2. Better use of instructional resources (buildings, equipment, staff and media).
3. Reduced costs to students, parents and taxpayers.
4. Increased student access to programs.
5. Provides students with a challenging curriculum.
6. Eliminates loss of time for the student.
7. Provides for a more effective program and better trained student.
8. Provides a system for identifying student competencies.
9. Improves community support for programs and institutions.

Barriers to Articulation

Using the data from the interview guides, the county plans, and a study of the literature, the barriers to articulation identified were those most prevalent in Arizona. Most of these barriers have been overcome by various institutions through their own efforts, but some require legislative or state board policy change. Those barriers are discussed below.

Turfmanship

There is an unwillingness on the part of vocational program providers to relinquish total local control over programs which can be a result of articulation.

State Funding Differences Between High School and Community Colleges

Possible loss of income or incurring additional expense in an articulated program is an expressed concern.

Teacher Certification Differences for Secondary and for Post-Secondary Vocational Teachers

Because of specific course requirements, it is not possible for many community college teachers to receive a secondary certificate without additional college courses.

Lack of Institutional Commitment to Articulation

Somewhat related to turfmanship is the recognition that not all governing boards and administrators see the value of articulation for their students and institutions.

Absence of Uniform Occupational Competencies

The absence of verified competencies in certain areas makes true articulation impossible.

Lack of Time and Money

Additional resources are needed to develop competencies and articulation agreements.

Differences in School Calendars

The number of instructional days differs between secondary and post-secondary institutions as do the beginning and ending dates of semesters and holidays. Many institutions do not have the operational flexibility for open-entry, open-exit programs.

Age Limitation

The current limitation can eliminate adults (over 21) from participating in high school vocational programs.

Ownership and Maintenance

Use of property and equipment by both secondary and post-secondary institutions creates problems when it is owned by only one of the institutions.

Chapter 5

RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of recommendations are made to overcome barriers to articulation and to build upon the current efforts. The recommendations are:

1. Develop a variation of the present state funding formulas for community colleges [full-time student equivalent (F.T.S.E.)] and secondary schools [average daily membership (A.D.M.)]. This variation should not financially penalize either institution because they wish to provide an articulated program for their students, or to maximize the use of available resources.

2. Modify present vocational program certification requirements to allow a secondary or community college teacher to teach in either institution on the same certificate. This implies that occupational skill and knowledge be of the first priority.

3. Change the state statutes to allow for students over the age of 21 to participate in vocational programs in secondary schools. Include those students in the state A.D.M. formula or allow districts to include them as part of their budget capacity.

4. Include funding incentives for articulated programs within the state plan for vocational education. These incentives should be provided for the formula and discretionary funds.

5. Encourage institutions through funding and in other ways to:

   a. Share equipment and facilities.

   b. Share teaching staff.

   c. Provide for the advanced placement of high school students in community college programs which have been articulated.

   d. Provide community college credit for articulated high school vocational courses when the student enrolls in the college.

   e. Provide high school credit for articulated community college courses.

   f. Provide for earning of both high school and community college credit concurrently.

g. Develop models which shorten the time required to gain competency in a specific area and maximize available resources.

6. Provide state leadership and funding for the continued development of program competencies between institutions who wish to articulate.

7. Provide state leadership and funding for staff development activities that provide the "know how" and value of articulation for teachers, supervisors, and administrators.

8. Coordinate the school calendars of secondary schools and community colleges in order to enhance articulation.

9. Explore and develop strategies and/or formulas which enhance the construction and joint use of facilities and equipment.

10. Develop an articulation model for use by secondary schools, community colleges, and other state offices which would:

a. Identify potential service area groupings in which articulation activities might occur.

b. Identify occupational clusters that have the greatest need and most potential for articulation.

c. Identify types of facilities and equipment which may be best articulated.

d. Identify strategies for developing agreements for both vertical and horizontal articulation.

e. Identify types of agreements which can be implemented.

f. Provide samples of formal written agreements.

g. Provide strategies for development of joint advisory committees.

h. Identify necessary steps to implement a valid articulation process.

i. Identify factors which encourage articulation.

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Appendix A

TASK FORCE 1995 MEMBERS

Mr. Harold Arp

Mr. Eddie Basha

Mr. Eugene L. Dorr

Mr. George Evans

Mr. Robert E. Gocke

Mr. Harry Hollack

Dr. Eugene Hughes

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Ms. Kathryn Kilroy

Mr. Manuel D. Martinez

Appendix B

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Institution or Agency_____ Date_____

1. Do any vocational education program articulation agreements currently exist with schools or other institutions within your area of service delivery?

   Yes_____ No_____

   Formal_____

   Informal_____

   Both_____

   A. Which Institutions? (Including business and industry)

   _____

   B. Identify the occupational areas in which articulation agreements exist_____

   C. Describe the agreement.

2. Do representatives of the various vocational education programs and institutions in or outside your service area meet periodically for the purpose of articulating course offerings?

   Yes_____ No_____ How often_____ Who attends_____

   Discussion:

3. How does your institution decide which vocational programs to offer in your service area?

   _____Employer Surveys
   _____Employer Requests
   _____State or National
   _____Manpower Projections
   _____Advisory Committees
   _____Local Manpower Projections
   _____Student Interest
   _____Other

   Discussion:

4. Do the institutions in your service area jointly publicize training programs and course offerings?

_____Yes _____No

Discussion:

5. Does your institution share or exchange teachers with other institutions in the area?

_____Yes _____No

Discussion:

6. Do the members of your advisory committees sit on other institutional advisory committees? _____Yes _____No _____Unsure

Discussion:

7. Does your institution work cooperatively with other institutions on proposal writing and/or joint fund raising efforts with other institutions in your attendance area?

_____Often _____Occasionally _____Almost Never

Discussion:

8. Do you award credits or provide advance standing to students with prior knowledge or skill?

_____None _____A Few _____Some _____Many

A. If yes, describe how.

9. Can students jointly enroll in two or more institutions in your attendance area at the same time?

_____Yes _____No

A. If yes, which ones?

Discussion:

10. Do you have contractual links with private vocational schools in your area?

_____Yes _____No

With whom?

11. To what extent does your institution duplicate vocational program offerings of other institutions in your service area?

_____Considerably _____Some _____A Little

A. If yes, which occupational areas?

12. What barriers do you see as preventing or hindering successful articulation among or between other institutions in your community? Fiscal, administrative, service, etc.?

Discussion:

13. If your institution does not currently have articulation agreements with others in your service area, do you feel that implementing such agreements should be pursued?

_____Yes _____No

Discussion:

14. Which vocational programs should institutions in your service area articulate?

Discussion: